

NEWS RELEASE
MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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PSC Encourages Montanans to Call 811 Before Digging

HELENA — State regulators are reminding Montanans to call 811 before beginning outdoor digging projects this spring.

April is recognized as national “Safe Digging Month” and Public Service Commission Chairman Bill Gallagher said a quick call to 811 two days before a digging project will help protect people from injury and prevent damage to underground utilities.

“After a long, cold Montana winter, many people are excited about the opportunity to finally put away the snow shovel and get to work planting shrubs and making other yard improvements,” Chairman Gallagher said. “Calling 811 to locate and mark underground utility lines is an important first step in tackling spring digging projects.”

Montana law requires anyone planning excavation to call 811 for utility line location, including for smaller projects such as landscaping, planting trees and shrubs and placing mailboxes.

When calling 811, a telephone operator asks for the location of a project and dispatches a utility representative to the site within two days to mark underground lines, using stakes or different colors of paint to identify the type of utility lines buried below ground.

The depth of utilities varies, and multiple lines may exist in an area. Some utility lines are just a few inches below the surface.

The Federal Communications Commission in 2005 designated 811 as the national number for businesses and homeowners to call, at no cost, before digging.

For more information, visit psc.mt.gov or contact PSC Communications/Research Director Justin Post at (406) 444-6171. Follow the PSC at www.Twitter.com/@MT_PSC or visit www.Facebook.com/MontanaPSC.